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Media Release

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i Source: [Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, May 2020](#)

The average weekly ordinary time earnings for full-time adults in Australia in May 2020 was \$1,714 (seasonally adjusted), up 3.3 per cent from November 2019, according to new Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) figures released today.

This release shows the compositional impact of COVID-19 restrictions on jobs and earnings.

Bjorn Jarvis, head of Labour Statistics at the ABS, said: "Lower paid jobs and industries were particularly impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, accounting for a high share of jobs lost.

"This fall in lower paid jobs led to an increase in average earnings for all employees because the remaining jobs had a higher earnings profile.

"In recent years, the six-monthly increase in average earnings for all employees has been around 1 per cent. The 3.8 per cent increase to mid-May highlights the extent of the major compositional change in jobs and earnings during this difficult period."

The increase in average earnings was more pronounced in the private sector, given the extent of lower paid job losses in the sector. However, the level of average earnings in the public sector remained higher.

Further details are available in [Average Weekly Earnings, May 2020 \(https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6302.0\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6302.0) (cat. no. 6302.0), available for free download from the ABS website <https://www.abs.gov.au> (<https://www.abs.gov.au/>).

Media notes

- The reference period for the May 2020 survey refers to the last pay period ending on or before 15 May 2020, at which point many COVID-19-related restrictions were in effect.
- Employees supported by the JobKeeper wage subsidy were in scope for the AWE survey, and these payments are included within employee earnings. However, employees supported by JobKeeper who were stood down either partially or fully with a corresponding change in their earnings, have been excluded from the Full-time Adult series.
- Percentage movements in average weekly earnings can be affected by changes in both the level of earnings per employee and in the composition of employment. Factors which can contribute to compositional change include variations in the proportion of full-time, part-time, casual and junior employees; variations in the occupational distribution within and across industries; and variations in the distribution of employment between industries.
- Estimates of percentage change have been calculated using unrounded estimates and may be different from, but are more accurate than, movements obtained from calculating percentage changes using the rounded estimates presented in this publication.
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